

## MEETING RECORD

**NAME OF GROUP:** Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** Thursday, February 24, 2005, 8:00 a.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS  
IN ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** Thomas Laging, V.J. Nelson, Patrick O'Donnell and Jeff Searcy present. **Jim Hewitt, Karen Kilgarin and Kim Todd absent.**

**Others:** Bob Ripley (Capitol Administration); Will Scott (Arlington Properties); Deb Johnson, T.J. Casady, Tad Frazier and Andy Vuko (Updowntowners, Inc.); Deena Winter (Lincoln Journal Star); Ed Zimmer and Michele Abendroth (Planning Dept.)

**STATED PURPOSE  
OF THE MEETING:** Regular Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

Mr. Searcy called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

***Approval of meeting notes of January 20, 2005***

The meeting notes of January 20, 2005 were unanimously approved by those members present.

***Use of public right-of-way at 14<sup>th</sup> and P Streets***

Will Scott stated that he acquired the property at 14<sup>th</sup> and P Street in January. This is the former Rock 'N Roll Runza on the northeast corner of 14<sup>th</sup> and P Streets. They want to enhance the P Street market scheme. The plan has been submitted to Public Works for the use of the right-of-way. He is here to get some feedback from the Commission. Currently there are light blue awnings, and they want to create more of a minimalist look. Zimmer stated that the Commission is evaluating if it will enhance the overall character of the district and not adversely affect the Capitol's setting.

Tom Laging asked if there is an outdoor terrace. Scott stated that there is a dock. Cole stated that they are proposing use of the existing right-of-way and expanding the sidewalk into the existing planting area. There is a drop-off lane in front of the P Street entrance to the building. They are proposing to have the planter bed line up along the drop-off lane cut-in. He stated that the trees would not be disturbed, but about 2.5 feet of planter beds would need to be removed. They will work with the Parks and Recreation Department on the shrubs. Scott stated that they would like to increase the drop-off lane for the Children's Museum and try to attract a tenant that could possibly play off the Children's Museum. He feels the drive-through is valuable, but he would like to close it as he does not feel it is the right thing on P Street.

Laging moved approval of the project pending approval from Public Works and the use of right-of-way; it was seconded by O'Donnell. Laging, Nelson, O'Donnell and Searcy voting 'yes'; Hewitt, Kilgarin and Todd absent.

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***Continued Discussion of Downtown Master Plan/Updowntowners Event Space***

Zimmer stated that today's discussion is to see how the Downtown Master Plan, Centennial Mall and event space might work together.

Deb Johnson of Updowntowners stated that events are a positive thing in downtown, but it is getting more difficult to find space in downtown. It is getting harder to close down streets in downtown. So they have been trying to find a space that is not going to affect traffic as much, but still be in downtown. Their goal was to get back to Centennial Mall. As an organization, they are trying to outline what their needs are. They are self-supporting, although they get \$15,000 per year from BID money to produce events. They have a contract with the City to do the parade as well. Income generation really has to come from the private sector. They want to continue to add to the downtown and the community and be financially responsible and add to the economic development. She stated that another challenge is that every time there is an event, it costs them about \$100,000 in infrastructure just to get started.

Johnson continued by stated that they like the 13<sup>th</sup> and P space for smaller venues. They have some concerns with the proposed location at 12<sup>th</sup> and M Street, as they do not believe it is large enough.

Laging stated that the Pershing site has always been identified by the Commission as a potential site. He asked if this location is a viable location. Johnson stated that if Pershing does move, there some concerns if the new tenant will be willing to work with them. It is a very attractive site, but there are a lot of unanswered questions. Laging stated that if they feel this is a viable location, it could coincide with the interests of the Commission and would help in promoting the site. Ripley agreed that the more the organizations that support an interest in activity on Centennial Mall, the better it is for the Mall. He added there is public awareness in wanting to get something done with Centennial Mall, and the more we can link together, the better it will be. He feels this is a great location for event space.

Johnson stated that they would like to meet with their Board of Directors and then report back to the Commission.

Searcy stated that the Commission is supportive of Updowntowners' efforts to re-kindle their enthusiasm with regard to the Centennial Mall site for festivals and event space.

***Miscellaneous***

Zimmer stated that Nebraska State Education Association has a temporary banner on their building. It is a vinyl banner which will only be up for 4-6 weeks.

Ripley noted that he and V.J. Nelson will meet with the Near South Neighborhood regarding the Goodhue Boulevard name change.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 a.m.